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Curry Arts Journal



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TIDE'S TURN

Nancy Garrison

Few within that charmed company would have understood why I hated Jenny, but I loathed her with the considerable venom of a brooding thirteen year-old, for Jenny had seduced my father.

Not sexually of course; nothing so overt as that, although there were undercurrents of feeling which I could not then comprehend. But in an important sense, and in a milieu which we both understood, Jenny had bested me in the manner of women, eyes steady, mano a mano, in an atmosphere of competitiveness which we had absorbed from earliest childhood.

The circle in which her family and mine revolved during the nineteen-thirties and -forties focused their lives, as their nineties counterparts still do, upon and around the Nowansett Yacht Club. Sailing was their passion, old or young, and racing was its consummation. Long summers were spent discussing it: training crews, readying boats, plotting the cut of a jib, the balloon of a spinnaker, the relative efficiency of one mainsail against another - and above all the tactics of winning with off-hand sportiveness which effectively sheathed the honed blade of fierce competition. A well-bred fiction prevailed which championed the sport rather than the winner.

The Nowansett Yacht Club sits compactly, snuggled back into the northwest curve of the harbor's edge, looking straight ahead at its sheltering craft within a protected basin. On its left is a small pebbled beach which, in the days before fiberglass bottoms, afforded yachtsmen a convenient venue for hauling and scraping the fouled underpinnings of their racing boats of weed and barnacle. To the right of the clubhouse is a shallow creek and overhanging marsh, its high water level falling barely below the small parking area so that on a full moon tide both beach and marsh are inundated and the tires of members' cars are lapped with a flotsam of eel grass.

The clubhouse crouches on sturdy pilings well above the flood tide mark, its sloping roof and long gables seeming disproportionately large in the spare shingle style so beloved by Brahmin

Yankees at the century's turn. A single "eye" window studies the harbor unblinkingly from beneath its curved eave and two flagpoles rise decorously from either corner of the porch flying the American flag and the triangular club ensign. Each summer evening as the sunset gun is fired and the Captain strikes the colors, members rise and observe silence for a long moment as the bright descending flags whip restlessly and the brass cannon's echo reverberates on the water and fades against the granite steadfastness of the breakwater. In this brief seafaring ceremony the daily illusion is perpetuated of shipmates bound together, conjoined and isolated on their vessel of privilege, a select company upon a charmed voyage.

The Yacht Club's atmosphere and essential character are defined by an ethic of coldwater simplicity, and although the substantial Bostonians who made up its charter membership could not have been called humorless, yet they enjoyed their sport with a certain seriousness. Visiting yachtsmen from the less spartan enclaves of Edgartown or Marblehead have frequently been taken aback by its austerity as they row ashore from their guest moorings. The clubhouse contains no restaurant or snack bar; not even a vending machine. Liquor was for many years forbidden on the premises, even at summer dances, inviting ingenious arrangements in automobiles since prohibition days. This stricture has been only recently relaxed by a relenting House Committee and an occasional four-hour license from the Town Fathers.

In its general air of sobriety the club conforms with its setting. Nowansett Harbor is a small one. The channel, which is narrow, demands periodic dredging, and at low water must be navigated with knowing precision. For even the smallest boats under sail it necessitates, in certain wind conditions, consummate skill to avoid running aground. This caveat has shaped, over the years, certain requisite standards for the sailors and lobstermen who daily use this channel. They are a terse and agile brotherhood, at once laconic and good-humored, who will courteously rally to tow a stranger gone aground yet at the same time relish the inaccessibility of their harbor and their own nonchalance in regularly negotiating its approach.

Within such a freemasonry, where the emphasis is unequivocally upon sailing, there is a cheerful but nonetheless rigorous acculturation of its youngest members. Jenny was a graceful extension of this hearty tradition, the very sum of its expectations. Just my age, smiling, wholesome and what is today described as perky, she was as well a formidable sailor. At the age of five she skippered her own Rookie, capsizing it merrily and then setting it straight with great good humor to continue sailing it until dinnertime. By the time she was nine she had her own Herreshoff twelve-footer and the summer she turned thirteen she was racing 110s.

I did not pay much attention to Jenny in those earliest years because she was a "summer person" whose family came down from Boston to their rambling house on Jericho Road only when the sailing season began. During the winter she went to school in Brookline. I was a "year rounder" who lived in Nowansett and went to school there, a shade of difference which held an ineffable significance.

Like Jenny, I had been started on sailing very early because it was my father's obsession. Our paths diverged, however, some time after we launched and routinely overturned our first Rookies; an exercise designed with the hope - vain in my case - of our acquiring "sea legs". I thought then as I do now that capsizing Rookies was a stupid pastime. They were uncomfortably hard, damp little bathtubs whipped about by the wind, demanding constant attention to keep afloat. In order to navigate it was necessary to hold the tiller and main sheet in one hand and operate the creaky little centerboard with the other. Not surprisingly they are no longer used to initiate young children.

What I *did* enjoy was sailing with my father in his sleek Manchester 17 on a mild day with a gentle southeast breeze, lazily trolling for mackerel and talking. I loved the exceptional days when my mother put up a picnic for us of cold chicken and deviled eggs and baked bean sandwiches with the crusts cut off - a family favorite - and my father would pour me a small paper cup full of his Ballantine's ale which was kept cool below in the bilge. I can still taste the faint bitterness of its bubbles and savor the kinship of

drinking this adult treat, we two together. But these were rare occasions. For the most part my father was all business when afloat. He was a fierce competitor who preferred a stern course and a stiff breeze to casual drifting and fishing, who barked orders at a step-lively crew of one - and in that capacity I was not invited to serve. I remember him as a sincerely gracious sport when he lost a race, yet the fact that he was a nearly perpetual winner surely contributed to his *bonhomie*.

And so perversely I abandoned serious sailing beyond the Rookie experience, gradually becoming bookish rather than athletic and professed boredom with the Yacht Club life. This sadly aggrieved my father. He felt there was something malcontent about a girl who preferred reading in a hammock to racing, and sketching pictures of boats to sailing them. The summer that I read *Jane Eyre*, *Gone With the Wind* and *Wuthering Heights* - a consecutive orgy of discovery which, while in its throes, left me groggy and oblivious to all else - saw my rebellion solidified. It was 1942 and I was twelve years old. My father was Commodore that year, a position of honor, and he was ashamed to have bred such a misfit. On Labor Day at the annual Chowder Party which marked the official finish of the sailing season, he presided with genial grace presenting the Club's polished challenge trophies with words of encouragement to competitive youngsters who had accomplished yachting feats in the best tradition, while I sat far back in the crowd munching oyster crackers and pretending not to care. Like all rebels I was sorely torn between following my own way and conforming to curry favor. I adored my father, but I would not follow his passion simply because it was *his*; and so I was sulky and defensive as mavericks always are, and as school began and fall evenings darkened, the tension at our dinner table became palpable and the air often heavy with suppressed resentment.

In New England's yachting communities of 1943 the rebirth of April found aficionados stripping paint, caulking teak decks and scraping spars as usual, and in that atmosphere of awakening Jenny presented herself to my father and to me in a new dimension. As friends worked at Osborne's Boatyard sepa-

rately and together, families intent upon their own boats needs, trading varnish lore and sandpaper secrets, it was clear that the makeup of our group had undergone a striking sea change: there were no longer young men among us. As summer advanced this dearth asserted itself in terms of racing, and Jenny, the prodigy, gradually took over as crew for my father in the highly competitive Saturday series and the scarcely less intense Sunday meetings. As a team they became invincible - the Commodore and his daughterly crew.

During the next two years I lived drearily with implied comparisons, generally unspoken but tacitly acknowledged. Jenny, who was wholesome, gifted and fun had stepped into the breach to rescue my father's weekends as his young men went off to war. He gave Jenny a beautiful present to commemorate their time of sailing together. It was a little silver loving cup with an engraved message. I have never known what it said.

Not long afterwards wartime austerity canceled the Yacht Club's racing schedule. In 1945 I went away to boarding school and in 1947 to college. Father died quite suddenly during my freshman year. I know he loved me in many ways, and there was a cautious happiness in those last years, yet he never really forgave me for not being the sailor daughter of his heart's core. We lacked the opportunity - or, in our Yankee silence, the will - to resolve this.

For much of my life I have assumed that the bruise I felt when I dwelt upon those wartime Yacht Club summers was the sore chafing of envy and anger toward Jenny. But lately I have come to believe that what I experienced was a gnawing dissatisfaction at myself for being so arbitrary a rebel. The dual forces which characterized my young life were, on the one hand, the lingering need to conform and on the other to diverge - not for the sake of divergence as a virtue, but simply because it is the way I am. What I railed against inwardly was my *otherness* ; at the same time knowing and valuing it as I would a rare lens through which my vision takes on a sometime-clarity which would not, I think, otherwise exist. Yet some part of me still hankers to be a bona fide member of that secure sunset-gun ship's company. There is a far

self within which still is one of them and judges by their standards the contrary girl who was welcome in a select league but instead turned sulkily away. At last this has come to bother me less and less. The angst I felt was that of an alien, though alien by my own choice.

Father would say I have steered a risky directional course, tacked my way out of the flotilla, willfully sacrificed the enveloping comfort of fellow travelers. Yet would he? Conceivably I have misjudged him. After all, we could not really have known each other. My sadness is that we were never adults together.

A charismatic man of great charm and humor in whom introspection had never been encouraged or developed, my father was above all a creature of action engaged in the sport which was his life's passion. A conscientious man and loving parent in a generation not noted for the empathetic fathering of daughters, he can be forgiven his exasperation at what must have seemed to him the inexplicably perverse withdrawal of a moody adolescent from the world he valued and loved.

Jenny lives in Palm Springs now. She comes to Nowansett for a month or two each summer to sail and play golf. We're cordial when we meet at the occasional cocktail party even when she tells me again - as she seems compelled to do - that her dearest possession is the memento my father gave her long ago. She is a pleasant woman whose days are encompassed by a circling of social sports, her face tan and lined from a life spent in their sunlit pursuit.

Recently I was asked to present the memorial trophy which wears my father's name to the young sailor who best exemplifies the kinds of sporting values he so fervently championed. At this annual Chowder Party the present Commodore wished also that I would speak a little about Father and about my memories of the Yacht Club fifty years ago in this its centennial season.

The friends my family knew then are dispersed to warmer latitudes or have died, but none ever relinquished their deep love for Nowansett. A succession of new sailors have flourished and faded since the sharp-sweet summers of my rebellion. The club-house remains changeless in its defiance of time. Fashions in boats

have altered: the 210 has replaced the Manchester 17 as a favored racing vehicle, but the aescetic absence of such amenities as dining rooms and tennis courts still prevails.

I stood very straight in front of the members gathered on this important day in the big plain room I remember so well with its silver cups and Paul Revere bowls burnished and glancing on the trophy table, and I said respectful words about my father's record as a yachtsman and a Commodore. I retold one or two of the self-deprecatingly funny tales that he loved to tell about himself with, I hoped, an echo of his wit. As the September sun dazzled on the harbor beyond the windows and the boats nodded at their moorings, bows into the wind, I saw again the young sailors who had crewed for Father: one sunk by a Kamikaze at the battle of the Coral Sea, another lost on submarine duty in the North Atlantic. There were only a handful of my contemporaries in the crowd, and none of my parents' generation, but I exchanged smiling clear-eye contact with one tanned face and said how dearly my father had loved sailing with Jenny Lawrence Potter in the years before his death.

You find yourself doing things you once thought impossible. I never even trembled. Somewhere along the shore of years a tide had turned and anger was washed away. Above the stillness of courteously intent members I could hear the slapping of halyards against the twin steel flagpoles and catch a glint of brass cannon - and for those minutes I recognized silently the process which leads through rebellion to an identity not dependent on any group, and felt jubilantly the reconciliation of an otherness which can yet, from time to time, still find itself within the pale.



A Day In Life

Kristan Scinto

A day so endless, eternal it seems
Yet passes it does, lost hopes and lost dreams
Pressure from outside as intense as within
Scolded by society, the formation of sin
I am yet a speck, forgive me so humble
I walk blind, hiding my stumble
Yet life is no hole, for I have found
If you live it with spirit, intact it stays bound
lift head of mine, high in the lights
But warn you arrogance, the light does get bright.



Do Not Let The Whiskey Darken Your Soul

Christopher M. Brown

Do not let the whiskey darken your soul
Tequila, SoCo, and Jack D taste so nice
No, you will throw up in that toilet bowl.

Through drink Goldshlager, you will pay the toll.
The Devil's water will cost a high price.
Do not let the whiskey darken your soul.

Good men by Bud's help, turn into a troll.
Girls not excluded, have needed this vice,
No, you will throw up in that toilet bowl.

Wild Turkey, in your stomach, puts a hole.
Not that I did not drink it once, but twice.
Do not let the whiskey darken your soul.

Grave men, downing woo-woos, have not one goal.
Jagermeister, will turn those men to mice.
No, you will throw up in that toilet bowl.

And you will ask, does it make me a mole?
Vodka will make you puke not twice, but thrice.
Do not let the whiskey darken your soul.
No, you will throw up in that toilet bowl.



**"Farewell, Farewell Until Freedom's
Day's Dance Rings Clear"**
(A sonnet for Susan Connell)

Andrew Horvet

In those eyes, I found a cool web of tears,
A tapestry of sorrow that rang so true.
You're walking away, after all these years
into the shadows of the world of blue.
Ah my love, my cool love, so still and sweet,
I hope again for my kind love to meet.
The hours of the sun have fallen to pass,
The shades of time have shrunk through the green grass.
Your footsteps are traced in the path of rain,
into the birth of a growing new day.
Farewell sad-eyed lady, your presence does fall
and I hear the echoes of your last call.



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**Antonio Machado's
El Viajero (The Traveler)**
Translation from the Spanish
Jeffery DiIuglio

I have gone on many roads,
I have opened many paths;
I have navigated on a hundred seas,
and I have come along side in a hundred streams.
Everywhere I have seen caravans of sadness,
proud and melancholy drunkards of dark shadow,
and pedants aside that look at, are silent
and are thinking that they know-
because they do not drink the wine of the bar,
Bad people that walk and go infecting that plague...

And everywhere I have seen people that dance and play,
when they can, and work their four plots of land.
Never, if they arrive at a site, do they ask where they
are arriving? When they walk, they ride
on the back of an old mule, and they don't know haste,
not even on the days of a feast.

Where there's wine, they drink wine.
where there isn't wine, cold water.

They are good people that live,
that labor, suffer and dream, and
on a day, like so many, they go to rest.
beneath the earth.





Leslie D'Alonzo



Louis Schragger



Leslie D'Alonzo



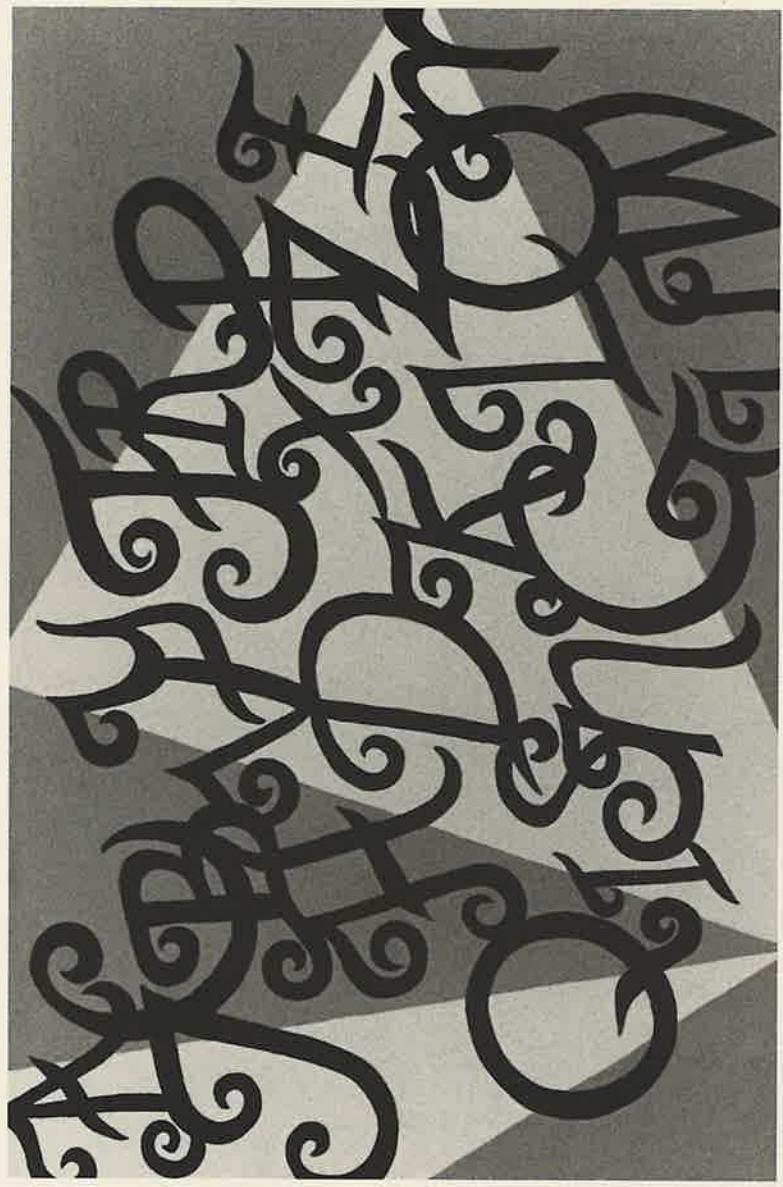
Tina Mahoney



Paul P. Alvord



Kimberly A. Turcone



Julie Ann Lund



Louis Shragger

Untitled

Ian Schwaab

I was a junior in high school when my father passed away. His death affected me in many different ways, some positive and some negative. It is ironic that the man who has influenced me the most and been the inspiration behind many of my successes is someone whom I got to know better after his death.

The fact of the matter is that, for many unfortunate reasons, I never had the chance to get to know my father very well. He was fifty-four years old when I was born. He was very wrapped up in his business, a book company that deals with other companies all over the world. His business called for him to travel all over. Even when he was in town he was spending time preparing my older brother to take over the company after his retirement. He was hardly ever home and my mother spent most of the time raising me. When I was eight my parents got divorced. I moved about a half-hour away from him and was reduced to seeing him once a week. Although I enjoy spending time with him, I often took off with my friends because I only saw them once a week as well. Then, things went downhill. He came down with Parkinsons disease, a disease that kills brain cells. He underwent treatment in a hospital and was allowed to return home. However, shortly after, he fell down the back stairs and broke his ribs. A neighbor found him and called an ambulance. His health deteriorated at a fast rate and he never returned home again.

It was at this point when I began to really pay attention to him. He was admitted into a nursing home where he could get constant attention. My brother and I devoted every Friday night to spending as much time with him as we could. In the two years that he was in the nursing home there were many good and bad times. The disease combined with his age had made him somewhat senile. Although we had great talks and went for walks together, he sometimes didn't know who we were. This, however, didn't stop me from seeing him every Friday night, even though all my friends like most seventeen-year old were partying.

I came home late one night from my friend's house. When

I walked in the house my mother was crying. My heart sank into my stomach. I knew I was wrong. She told me that his doctor called and said that he was dying and he probably wouldn't make it through the night. If I had anything I wanted to say to him I would have to leave immediately. I called my brother and he left right away. The three of us flew to the nursing home. When we arrived, the doctor was outside waiting. We had arrived too late.

I remember a deep feeling of regret. I regretted taking off with my friends when I should have been spending time with him. I regretted sometimes feeling embarrassed because he was older than most of the other kids' dads. But most of all I regretted not being able to tell him that I loved him. I know that sometimes kids are embarrassed to say that, but I would've given anything to say it to him that night.

Since his death I have learned many things about him. I learned how he was very respected in his profession. He was known as someone who was hard driving, always seeking perfection. I learned that although he was sometimes hard on the outside, he was very light at heart when it came to his family, especially his children. He was never satisfied watching and waiting for things to happen: he went out and made them happen. He loved to travel and had seen much of the world. In fact he met and married my mother on a world trip. As I continue to learn more and more about him, the feeling of regret diminishes. He lived a life as full as anyone could ask for.

Through this knowledge of my father's life, my own memory opens up and I recall feelings and thoughts of times past. I can remember going to the comics. I remember him being at my soccer and basketball games. I remember listening to records together on Saturday afternoons. Most of all, I remember him always challenging me to be the best I can be. It is these thoughts that continue to insure me to live my life like he did: to the fullest.



The Leaf

Tina Mahoney

It is one of many in its place
but each is different,
with many colors hiding what
is beneath.

The long cold nights surround
this delicate leaf.

Its innocence doesn't know,
what the warm sun has hidden.
Soon that warmth is taken away.

Torn from its safety,
in a cold harsh way,
from that place that held it close
and let life into its veins.

Pulled by the wind,
to drift away,
to a place where it will lie
among other leaves
with the same fate.
To lose its shield of colors
and become like them.



Lost Love

Ami Ringler

And so my love
I know not who you are,
Or where you came from,
Nor to what god you pray,
Yet I can say, I love you
For it is you that I lost.

For a glimpse of time, I was yours and you were mine.
For a second in space, we were one face to face.

United we stood tall, and now alone I fall.
Fall into the pit of the loveless.
Again a loveless wanderer.

It seems I spend my life wandering
for the love that I never had.
But for the precious minute we shared.
And now I write this in my grief & despair.

The king of kings could give me all things.
But now, if you are not there, it means nothing.
You touched a part of me, that I can feel

But never see.
A tender space,
A place empty of love,
and for a brief time it was yours,
and you were mine.

But now I am empty, empty once again



Yours and Mine

Bryan Sisbarro

Land it's not that far away
come stand at the edge of my bay
listen to the man he's turning gray
what is wrong with the world today
ride my magic carpet into the ground
six feet under that's where you're bound

I know the hills are steep so start by climbing
the mounds you live in the street
but murder the quiet town.



Modern day Hansel and Gretel

Tammy Mahoney

Love left us out here alone
Helpless and wandering
Nowhere to go.
We have only to follow the pieces
of our broken hearts
scattered along the way.
Lost in the cold and unwelcoming woods.
Longing to return home.
What is home?
A place where our dreams are shattered
and our hopes are ignored
Kindness is only offered to those
less fortunate than ourselves
I'll take your hand and together
we will find refuge.
A place filled with peace and love
where there are no cruel words to hurt us.

We are survivors

Finding strength only in each other's eyes.
Childhood's journey tastes bittersweet.
Beneath the sugary layer is the poison
that slowly tries to take our lives away.
All for someone else's selfish gain.
Always wanting more than we can ever give.
Walking through the darkness with a candle
but no match to light it.
Our home of pleasures
has crumbled around our heads.
We are again alone.



Untitled

Patricia Doherty

Some friends come and go
Taking what they can on their way out
Not stopping to notice
What they are doing
Aware of my good nature
And taking advantage of it as much as they can

Then there's the one friend
Who comes in your life
Supporting you through the rough moments
Understanding you when your down
Showing you what he/she signifies as your wonderful gifts
Highlighting them

Trying to bring out that smile
You shared together often
Knowing you're hurting
And willing to stand by you until the end

Looking at the whole picture
It's at first hard to deal
With the many lousy friends
Yet what it really comes down to
It's not the people who treat us lousy that count
It's the one that will stand by their "friends"
Because they simply "care"
These friends are the people to treasure
And never take for granted



Spring

Tara Stevens

The flowers of springtime come,
and bring me joy.
They remind me of the good things.

The animals are aroused from their long slumber.
The birds dance on the horizon.
The flowers of springtime come.

The children laugh.
They play in joy.
The remind me of the good things.

The snow is gone.
The grass peeks through.
The flowers of springtime come.

The sun is glorious.
It awakens its children.
The flowers of springtime come.



Suicide

Kimberly A. Turcone

words fall silent
hope is destroyed
unable to look up
to a world left behind

thin blades of metal now
cut deeper than a knife
punctures bleed fast
cascading to end a life

a walk through an empty place
sound is never heard
feet fall into a dream
with the world turning to a blur

weakness prevails
fall on knees
getting ready for the moment
this time wasn't a tease

darkness invades
a soul left to burn
sleep is eternal
with the drop of the urn.



Untitled

Kristina Arria

Look at you, you shine like the sun.
I feel like darkness when you are not near me.
Shine your light my way so I can feel your rainbow.
Color me with your feelings.
Wrap your arm around me like water surrounding an island.
Just don't let me drown.
When you feel I've become an extra planet in your universe,
only then can you set me free.



The Edge

Amy Coyle

Here you are again- you can feel the pressure building. It's not too unfamiliar, is it? The feeling starts in your feet; suddenly your shoes have become two sizes too small and you're aware of a faint throbbing that is ready to rip them apart at the sides. Leaning back in your chair your legs are no longer a part of your body- just two heavy branches wrapped in denim read to sink right through the floor. Your arms, on the other hand, are crossed- tightly gripping your elbow to keep all of that anger and self-pity locked inside. You know if you lose your grip it will all culminate and explode; rip right through your chest and destroy this whole god-forsaken place in a mass of fire. Which brings us right up to that thing you call a head. The big warehouse- factory - of your life that manufactures thoughts and stores random information. Somewhere along the line, everything went wrong. Some sort of chemical malfunction, maybe. But it is that messed up jumble of thoughts that they're trying to untangle. Of course, no one seems to care that you, too, are spending every ounce of energy you possess to make some sense of it all. Trying to separate memories from pain- you can't even tell the difference anymore- trying to understand why you go in circles over and over again- the same damned circles- and never get anywhere. So they'll pick away bit by bit until someone solves the puzzle and puts that rubber stamp on your forehead. "Mentally Disturbed" or "Paranoid Schizophrenic" or whatever. But they'll never really know what it's like, will they? They'll just see your enormous blue eyes set against a canvas of pale pink. That sad, confused look of a young boy's innocent face forced to deal with a man's problems.

Kate always used to tell you, after the fight and making up, that you have the face for being angry. She said that your mouth could be shouting words but your eyes would still be pleading for help. But what did she know about you anyway, and what would she say if she could see you now? Who would have thought that after only twenty- three years you could make such a mess of your life?

As much as you hate being here, you know it is what you have to do- to search for an answer to it all. You owe it to someone; maybe that little girl or her family, maybe your own family, or maybe even to yourself- either way, it is an obligation that you have to fill.

But you hate waiting rooms. Especially this waiting room. Everything looking so neat and orderly. Everything always looks so nice. The magazine rack against the wall is fully stocked and an issue of *New Age* magazine, with a cover story on dreams' link to the unconscious, and the magazine rests right next to the plastic orange flower arrangement. The chairs surrounding the table could be the most comfortable in the world- you couldn't relax in them if you tried. This whole scene makes you uneasy, the color scheme is tan or beige or whatever you want to call it- you are sure it was carefully picked out to "ease" the anxiety of patients. The whole damned love-song-elevator music playing in the background to soothe your nerves.

After scanning the article on dreams, your eyes fall upon the woman sitting behind the desk to your left. You guess that she is in her mid-forties. Her blond hair is already tinted with gray and the wrinkles on her face make her features look severe, not softer like you would think. She strikes you as a mean woman- sitting there, looking sterile in her white dress and open white button-down sweater- busily working on patient files or insurance bills or something. Maybe it is just name tag -Donna that gets to you. Although she is nothing like Kate's friend, that name will hurt you forever. Kate used to always say, "Tommy, I know you don't like my friends but please try, for me, just to get along with them." You didn't like her friends and you didn't like being called Tommy, either. It always seemed like an insult; like you were a little boy who didn't know how to cross the street by himself. But Kate was a different story. All she had to do was look at you a certain way and kiss you a certain way (you still can't figure out what it was) and she could have called you anything she wanted. You loved it when she said your name. Oh well, that was a long time ago and has nothing to do with your being here now.

Of course, Dr. Marion doesn't seem to think so. Always

asking question about Kate or your father or other irrelevant things. Christ, you've been here- what- six times now? and you still can't figure out what happens. The doctors said that it had nothing to do with your physical health and "suggested" that you "talk out your feelings" with a shrink. None of them know a thing about you. But what else were you supposed to do?

So you come here and answer questions and talk about things, but what difference is it really making? I mean there is not much you can tell him. You really don't remember the details- all you know about your father's death is that it was your twelfth birthday and your Dad bought you a new bicycle so you could ride together. After your party the two of you went for a ride and you told him to chase you because you wanted to show him how strong you were. You peddled as fast as you could, never thinking that he wouldn't be able to keep up. You went to cross the street but hit a patch of sand and fell over. You were trying to untangle your shoelaces from the peddle and the rest is a blur. The car was coming at you- they swerved to avoid you- you heard a scream. When you woke up two days later, you knew he was gone. And that was all you remembered.

It is a Tuesday morning. You wake up early and have extra time, so you decide to take the back roads to work. Besides, it's a beautiful morning and you have a lot on your mind. You drank yourself to sleep last night and dreamt about your father. It was a bizarre dream and left you with an empty, hollowed out feeling. It's been eleven years now but the dream was so real, so-

"I've seen fire and I've seen rain" perfect. A little James Taylor on the radio, a beautiful morning. So you recline your car seat one notch, sit back, and feel the warmth on your face from the sun shining in through the windshield. It is early autumn and everything is beautiful and bright. The other cars on the road become nonexistent and the road disappears- just you, taking in the scenery and you feel good, for the moment. "but I always thought that I'd see you again"

You never used to like James Taylor at all. Until Kate took those two weeks to go out west. She left the tape in your car. God,

those were the two longest weeks and you listened to the tape everyday, everywhere you went. Ever since, you know all the words to each song. You really can't blame her for leaving. It was your own damn fault. Nice guy you are- one person who has ever understood you asks you to be nice to her friends that you can't stand- so you sleep with the most evil one of them all. Way to go, asshole. But if she only could have known how much you loved her and how sorry you were, maybe she would have forgiven you. Or if she could have heard Donna laughing at the opportunity to finally split you and her up, maybe she would have realized how manipulative her friend was.

You turn off the radio. You don't want to listen anymore, anyway. You return your seat upright - the sun has started shining in your eyes and bothers you.

You can barely remember your father's face - it seems so long - but last night he was there. It was your birthday - he stood there with the bike - "C'mon Tommy, let's take it for a ride." The two of you rode up onto the path through the woods. You got in front to show him how strong you were, until things started to look unfamiliar and you turned around and he was gone. There you were in the woods, alone. And you woke up.

Up the road a twelve year old girl waits in the window of her house on the corner; waiting for the school bus. She sees your car coming and the bus about a mile behind you. You, too, see the house or at least parts of it. The sun reflects on your windshield and white-washes your eyes. It looks like something out of a fun house at an amusement park - all warped with mirrors and glass...

All you have to do is put your foot on the brake - slow it down to maybe thirty five, put your hand on the steering wheel, and turn maybe a quarter of an inch.

But there's your father's face, Donna's evil sarcastic laugh, Kate's teary eyes...

The little girl sees your car coming, but her eyes are still on the bus -

The house is getting closer. It seems to be getting bigger by the second. "C'mon Tommy, let's take it for a ride,"...

You can't move your hand or your foot - they are no longer a part of your body. The speedometer reads fifty. You are completely numb -

The girl's eyes have moved from the bus to you - the car still hasn't slowed -

The house is getting bigger - you father's face - "C'mon, Tommy, let's take it for a ride." - Kate's devastated voice echoing through your head - "Tommy, how could you do this to me?" - Happy Birthday, son" -

The last thing you see is a twelve year old face struck with horror, terrified eyes that can't believe what they are seeing -

Her eyes fly towards you voices ringing in your ears - shattering glass - your numb body is thrust forward as the house covers your windshield in an instant of impact.

"Tommy, Dr. Marion is ready to see you now."



The Woman In The Rain

A.P. Dath

They walk up and down the street, day in and day out.

Pretending I'm not there.

Pretending they don't give a damn.

And I just stand there, alone in the rain.

I have myself that's all I need.

Why should they care to give me a little change.

Or at least give me some human kindness.

But you're too caught up, in your own little world of:

take

want

and greed

Why should I matter.

Who cares anyway,

I have myself, that is all I need.

So mister keep your change.

And spare your sympathy. I've heard it all before.

And I ain't gonna hear it again.



Untitled

Karen Davis

Love is not easy. Although it has its high points, there are times when it can be a roller coaster ride from hell. Sometimes it's dirty; sometimes it's mean; but most of all, it's hard to dress for.

I met the love of my life when I started working in a bakery. We met wearing the same standard formless white uniform; pants that were designed for a man with no butt, a hat designed for a man with an unusually large skull, and a very plain, very white shirt. In the bakery, love was blind. In the bakery, Andy and I were equal; we had no sense of style, although not by choice, and we were both subject to the rigors of life in the food service business. Our only difference was that his butt fit better in his pants.

Contrary to popular belief, life existed outside the bakery. So did fashion. Admittedly, I was never a meticulously fashion-conscious dresser: if it fit, I wore it, and if I looked better than dead in it, I wore it until it disintegrated. Love, I was soon to find out, changed all that. Love became my personal fashion consultant; I began wearing colored tee shirts underneath my white-issue shirt to attract the male's attention. It worked; no sooner had I memorized the washing instructions, that Andy had asked me on our first date.

Many people believe that the invisible line drawn through the sexes is traced by every child at the onset of puberty. This is not so. Breast and pubic hair have very little to do with the separation of the sexes. The separation occurs sometimes in early childhood when girls begin to care what color best brings out their natural highlights and boys begin to wear whatever they can find on the floor that is clean and nearly wrinkle-free. As we grow and mature, the line is constantly being defined by our different personalities. When we fall in love, however this line is etched in permanent fabric marker ink. It is indelible: impervious to bleach, sweat, and the most expensive detergents. When I met Andy, I began to care. My purse matched my shoes. My shirts matched my eyes, my bra matched my panties. My taste in clothes began its ascent

from casual to anal; I began to buy socks to match my shirts. Even the most casual occasion called for an hour of intense consultation between my sister and me, she became a fashion guru. For almost a year she spent more time in my closet than I had in the ten years past. For a time I considered just moving her in, but there wasn't enough room between my jeans and cotton tops. Although Heather could tell me which shade brown flats looked best with the paisley shirt, she couldn't advise me what kind of mood Andy might be in when he picked me up. Unfortunately, her fashion savvy met with more than a few obstacles. Although there were many that we successfully leaped over, there is one that she and I still cannot outwit. His name is Andy.

Andy is what many would call "a free spirit." He lives by intuition and "the moment," which, while quite refreshing, was a source of great angst for me when I had to decide what kind of event I was dressing for. Had I any idea that we were going to have a moonlight picnic with Chinese take-out, I wouldn't have worn crepe de chine slacks with sling-back pumps. If I had known we were going to the beach, I would have worn a bathing suit. Andy never thinks about these things for two reasons. The first is his gender. The second is that his taste in clothing is very simple; if it's black cotton and permanent press, he owns it.

Yes, the man I fell in love with remains a constant stain in the fabric of fashion. Needless to say, we turned many heads. There were many times that we would walk into restaurants amid admiring and sympathetic smiles. The admiring smiles were directed at Andy; he was sure to receive an appreciative nod from every man present, not because of the impeccable dressed female on his arm, but because he sauntered in wearing torn black pants, mismatched socks, dirty (black) converse sneakers (tied in the back), and a tie-dyed tee shirt with dancing bears on it. The sympathetic smiles were either mine, or as you may have expected, they were from every other impeccably dressed female who, at some point during the evening, had torn their hair out trying to get their dates to put on a pair of pants that didn't advertise their brand of underwear.

This routine like an over-washed delicate fabric, soon wore

thin. My sister came into my room in tears one evening after being paged for assistance. "I can't live like this anymore," she said. "It's time that you learned how to dress yourself. I can't be held responsible for your wardrobe anymore. I have needs," she cried. (Artists can be so temperamental.) I was devastated. I was lost. That night I dressed myself. Later that evening I asked Andy, "Honey, how do I look tonight?" "Fine," he answered. "you always look nice. A little overdressed sometimes, but always nice."

"Nice?" I said. "Nice?" "That's it?" "You mean to tell me that I have been wasting hours upon hours of my time and energy, not to mention money, trying to impress you with my excellent taste and all I get is nice? I wore high heels for you. I wore a thong for you. My sister had a breakdown because of you."

"That's not my problem," he said. "You should wear what makes you comfortable, not what you think is going to impress me."

That blew it. It's been years since that conversation. Although it was painful, I decided that he was right. I began dressing for myself, but the recovery was long. I progressed gradually. First I stopped doing lint checks. Then I started dressing for the weather. My life returned to its normal, pre-love fashion. Now its gotten to the point where dressing up means putting on a bra and wearing something without a hole. I became as comfortable with love that I was with my clothing. That is, until Andy looked at me one day and asked, "Karen, whatever happened to that thong I liked so much?"



The Dream

Jesse Nguyen Van Hung Hawkins

I'm in bed and turning because my head feels as if someone is tightening a vice around my temples. My eyes snap open and my heart is pounding frantically as if I can't breath anymore. The nightmare of my parents being killed has awakened me again. I lie there in bed with tears running down my cheeks; my whole body chills with the fear of seeing my parents being killed.

As I try to forget about the dream, other stories that I have been told or have read come all at once and my head throbs with pain. The C-5A cargo plane, the first secret attempt to save the children from war in Vietnam, was shot down with two hundred and thirty orphans. Only six orphans lived through the crash. Two months later, the last flight out of Saigon brought me to the U.S. as a two year old orphan. I'm extremely glad I made it to the United States, but at the same time I feel extremely guilty because I'm alive and my natural parents aren't. At times I wish it was me that died and not my parents because I feel so awful about being alive. That is a great loss to me, but there are dreams and goals to come later in life that make me feel good and give me great hope, such as going back to Vietnam and working.

I can see myself helping other people in Vietnam, planting trees or doing human services or physical therapy. I also can see myself living there for a good deal of time. In my mind I am wearing the traditional dress that comes down to my knees, and also the customary black pants. The dress is called *ao dai* and is a red-orange color. On the back there's a silhouette of a Bonsai tree leaning towards the right; the front has a dragon and phoenix intertwining with each other. People with broad straw hats gather rice for the harvest, using their hats as baskets. The people are wading knee deep in rice paddies. The wide brims block out the sun from their faces. I can see and hear the gathering of the people for the Lunar New Year (the year of the monkey) and I can imagine watching the parade. I can smell the burning of the incense and the cheers of the children running around me decorating me with confetti and paper streamers. The feeling that flows through me

overwhelms me and I'm so happy that I start to cry. I am glad to
be back in my birth place once again.



Driving

Karen Davis

We are on a superhighway.
I am in the right lane,
Driving a late-model Buick;
Conservative,
Predictable.
You are in the far left lane,
Driving your fancy car;
Carefree,
Impetuous.

We are on parallel planes which
Never intersect;
They merge.

In the middle lane we are
Equal,
Exposed,
Vulnerable.

When we meet
We exchange pieces of ourselves;
Vital information.
I am careful not to lose the me in myself.
You cling to the you in you.

We will never have all of each other.
That would be a terrible accident.
Here we are separate,
But Equal;
Symbiotic,
Struggling to maintain
a delicate balance.



Untitled

Christopher Brown

He tugged at his father's jacket,
As he walked along the wall.
As when his father left that fall.

He sighs, "Oh Captain, My Captain,"
As tears roll down his face.
Feeling the relief of the people around him.
It was, to him, a holy place.

His own son tugs his pant leg,
He picks him up, and holds him tight.
A small hand wipes away his tears.
He prays that boy will never fight.

They walk on together hand in hand.
His son kicking the grass covering
with his own father whom he lost.

He turns and sees the sun rise full,
And shine on the two standing together.
One dead, one sad, and one, who is still very small.



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